



Learning and Teaching Policy
EYFS
(September 2018)

Background

“Play is essential to development because it contributes to the cognitive, physical, social, and emotional well-being of children... Play is so important to optimal child development that it has been recognized by the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights as a right of every child.”

(Kenneth R. Ginsburg, et al.)

Star Mirdif follows a play-based approach to learning and teaching, which is grounded by an understanding of the uniqueness of neurological development from birth to seven. During this phase children learn through concrete experiences, by revisiting and experiencing ideas in different contexts, by having the opportunity to embed learning ‘behaviours’ and by being exposed to teaching that utilises intrinsic motivation.

At Star Mirdif, we also recognise the following key indicators as essential to the long-term success of our children due to the nature of their backgrounds, their native languages and their different experiences in life so far,

- Language – the majority of children at Star are EAL
- PSED
- PD
- I CAN – Growth Mindset

Curriculum

At Star Mirdif we follow the EYFS curriculum for England and Wales which divides learning into 7 key areas;

Prime Areas:

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Communication and Language

Physical Development

Specific Areas:

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding the World

Expressive Arts and Design

It also incorporates the Characteristics of Effective Learning, through which we aim to develop the children’s intrinsic motivation and learning behaviours.

- **Playing and exploring:**

Children are:

- encouraged to explore and develop their own ideas
- helped to achieve new things, without adults doing it for them
- encouraged to try new things and take risks to succeed
- able to have uninterrupted time to play and explore
- able to have flexible space to explore and move around freely

- **Active learning:**

Children:

- Experience 'open ended' resources and benefit from activities which have no adult – defined learning outcomes
- Have sustained time for concentration, engagement and extended thinking
- Have opportunities to exercise choice over their activities- setting their own goals and methods

- **Creating and thinking critically:**

- children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things
- children learn together and from each other

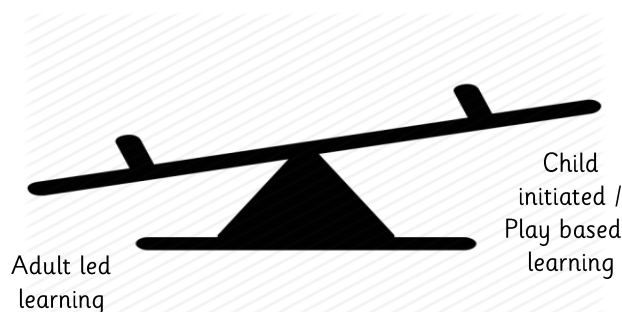
In addition we teach Physical Education, Music, Swimming (FS2)

In FS2 children also have direct teaching of Phonics.

Learning and Teaching

*"Teaching should not be taken to imply a 'top down' or formal way of working. It is a **broad term** which covers the many different ways in which adults help young children learn. It includes their **interactions with children** during planned and child-initiated play and activities: **communicating and modelling language, showing, explaining, demonstrating, exploring ideas, encouraging, questioning, recalling, providing a narrative for what they are doing, facilitating and setting challenges**. It takes account of the **equipment they provide** and the attention to the **physical environment** as well as the **structure and routines** of the day that establish expectations. Integral to teaching is how practitioners **assess** what children know, understand and can do as well as take account of their **interests and dispositions** to learning (characteristics of effective learning), and use this information to **plan children's next steps** in learning and **monitor their progress**."*

(OFSTED, EYFS guidance for inspectors)



"Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity."

Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others."(EYFS Framework, para 1.8)

Teaching and Learning in Foundation Stage

At Star Mirdif, the interplay between teachers, adults and children is a continuum, with the adults making constant decisions about the level of formality, structure and dependence that would promote the best possible learning to achieve the outcomes.

At Star Mirdif, when planning, the following questions are asked...

- Why am I doing this?
- Who is it for?
- Do all the children need to do it?

The role of the Adult

Assessment is at the heart of successful provision in early years. Through an understanding of the strengths, areas for development, interests and attitudes of the children the adults will be able to plan the right balance of activities to meet their needs, enabling the children to make rapid progress from their starting points.

At Star Mirdif our adults:

- Organise the environment for learning
- Build relationships
- Have secure knowledge of child development
- Understand the importance of well-being and involvement (engagement)
- Accurately judge and track progress
- Plan from assessment
- Facilitate learning
- Provide direction, based on their knowledge of the child

Learning Environment

At Star Mirdif, we recognise the crucial role of the environment as an educator of the child. It is a vital factor in supporting children to learn. Creating areas to meet the different needs of play can enable children to engage in activities and use the space to build on their ideas and experiences. The environment should encourage investigation and exploration. This supports children in thinking of ideas and alternative ways to develop their understanding.

The learning environment in each classroom is set up using both **continuous and enhanced provision**.

Continuous provision is at the heart of a structured environment for quality learning and teaching. Continuous provision offers an environment and meaningful context for the many encounters and interactions that take place between children/children, and between adults/children. Teachers enhance areas of the provision to allow children to directly meet learning outcomes.

Well planned resourcing of continuous provision should:

- Continue the learning in the teachers/adults absence
- Ensure high quality play and levels of engagement
- Enable all children to access learning at their own level, embedding existing skills and understanding and exploring new learning
- Be print rich including the labeling of resources (posters, maps, lists)
- Provide cross-curricular opportunities for the development of early maths skills

At Star Mirdif, the non-negotiable areas of continuous provision are:

1. Writing and Mark Making Area
2. Maths Area
3. Role Play Area
4. Reading Area
5. Construction/Small World Area
6. Sand/Water/Investigation Area
7. Creative Area (Junk Modeling)

Shared Learning Environment

In both FS1 and FS2 the children have access to a large shared area. This usage of these areas are planned by Year Group teachers and offer a mix of enhanced and continuous provision.

Outdoors

The outdoor environment is hugely important to children's development and is a great way to nurture the minds of children and encourage them to engage in activities. The large open spaces enable children to use their imagination and problem-solving skills to develop their play. When outdoors, our staff interact with children as they would indoors as much as safety allows.

Please note there are no allocated playtimes, use of the outdoors will be by the teachers discretion. Length of time/how this is used is designed to be flexible.

Displays – please see whole school display policy

In EYFS, we are proud to celebrate the work of our children. Displays of children's work reflect the children's uniqueness and individuality. Displays in Foundation Stage enhance children's leaning and is independent work. Displays include: Pupil Voice, Celebration walls (classroom), Characteristics of Effective Learning.

Each classroom must have:

1. Alphabet and phonics display
2. Numbers
3. Days / months / birthdays
4. Visual Timetable
5. Photos or examples of children's work on every display (apart from interactive displays)
6. Planning

Assessment:

Assessment is completed through continuous provision and focused activities. Learning journals of the children can be found on the digital programme of 'Tapestry', paper based learning journeys in each classroom and writing books (FS2)